

Message Text

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SUBJECT: LAW OF THE SEA

1. SUMMARY. TORONTO GLOBE & MAIL HAS PUBLISHED FIVE-PART SERIES ON LAW OF THE SEA (LOS) WHICH REVIEWS BACKGROUND LEADING TO GENEVA CONFERENCE AND STATES POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THAT CONFERENCE; CITES THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES (PASSAGE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STRAITS AND EXPLOITATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED), AND CONCLUDES BY CRITICAL QUESTIONING OF CANADIAN POSITION AT LOS NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. INFLUENTIAL TORONTO GLOBE & MAIL HAS PUBLISHED FIVE-PART SERIES BY COLUMNIST GEOFFREY STEVENS ON FORTHCOMING LOS NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. ARTICLES IN PART REPRESENT GOOD REPORTING ON WHAT WAS TRANSPIRED IN PAST AND THOUGHTFUL COMMENT ON SOME OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED. (FULL TEXTS BEING POUCHED TO D/LOS.)

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2. AFTER REVIEWING BACKGROUND OF LOS NEGOTIATIONS

STEVENS STATES THAT THERE ARE REASONS FOR BEING BOTH OPTIMISTIC AND PESSIMISTIC ABOUT GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS: ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, "A VERY REAL DETERMINATION" ON THE PART OF ALMOST ALL DELEGATES TO COME UP WITH A TREATY AND "THE SENSE OF URGENCY WHICH...SURROUNDS THE CONFERENCE;" ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, "NOT VERY MUCH SEEMS TO HAVE HAPPENED" SINCE CARACAS, "NO ONE IS QUITE SURE WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN EVERYONE GETS TO GENEVA," AND THERE IS ALREADY TALK OF YET ANOTHER LOS CONFERENCE IN 1976.

3. IN HIS THIRD ARTICLE, STEVENS FOCUSES ON TWO MOST DIFFICULT ISSUES: PASSAGE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STRAITS AND EXPLOITATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED. HE SAYS THESE STAND AS BEING EXCEPTIONALLY DIFFICULT "BECAUSE THEY INIMATELY AFFECT THE INTEREST OF THE US AND BECAUSE THE US CONGRESS CANNOT BE COUNTED ON TO RATIFY ANY TREATY WHICH FAILS TO SATISFY US INTERESTS." STEVENS THEN PROCEEDS TO EXPLAIN THE TWO ISSUES IN REASONABLY STRAIGHTFORWARD WAY. HE CONCLUDES ARTICLE BY SAYING "...KEEP ONE EYE PEELED FOR SIGNS OF COMPROMISE AT GENEVA ON THE STRAITS AND SEABED ISSUES; KEEP THE OTHER EYE... ON WASHINGTON. IF THE CONGRESS CONCLUDES THAT GENEVA IS NOT MAKING PROGRESS ON ISSUES VITAL TO AMERICAN INTERESTS, IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION..."

4. LAST TWO ARTICLES FOCUS ON CANADIAN INTERESTS. STEVENS VIEWS NEGOTIATIONS AS "GOING PRETTY DARN WELL FOR CANADA" AND CITES CONSENSUS RE 12-MILE TERRITORIAL WATERS AND 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE BUT, SAYS STEVENS, "WE WANT MORE...WE WOULD REALLY LIKE TO PUSH THE ECONOMIC ZONE ALL THE WAY OUT TO THE CONTINENTAL MARGIN..." WHILE HE SAYS CHANCES ARE GOOD FOR CANADA'S UNILATERAL CLAIM TO THE ARCTIC WATERS, HE IS NOT SO OPTIMISTIC RE POLLUTION CONTROL IN ECONOMIC ZONES AND RE CANADA'S CLAIM TO THE CONTINENTAL MARGIN. ON FISHERIES, HE SAYS THERE IS LESS OUTRIGHT OPPOSITION TO (CANADA'S POSITION ON SALMON "...BUT THERE IS ALSO LESS OUTRIGHT SUPPORT."

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5. IN FINAL COLUMN, STEVENS QUESTIONS WHETHER CANADA'S BEST INTERESTS ARE SERVED BY THE POLICY IT IS PURSUING. HE QUOTES PRIME MINISTER TRUDEA'S CALL "FOR EQUITABLE SHARING OF THE WORLD'S WEALTH AND RESOURCES" AND THEN QUOTES FOREIGN MINISTER MACEACHEN WHO, IN STEVENS'VIEW, "...IS SPELLING OUT A BLATANTLY NATIONALISTIC POLICY DESIGNED TO GUARANTEE THAT CANADA WILL NOT HAVE TO SHARE ANYTHING WITH ANYONE..."

THESE TWO OPPOSITE VIEWS REVEAL A "SCHIZOPHRENIA
IN CANADA'S APPROACH TO THE LOS NEGOTIATIONS." AFTER
BRIEFLY CITING FIGURES SHOWING HOW COASTAL STATES'
WEALTH WOULD BE VASTLY EXPANDED BY CANADA'S
POLICIES, STEVENS ASKS "DOES CANADA REALLY NEED
AN ECONOMIC ZONE THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN TO THE CONTINENTAL
MARGIN?" STEVENS CONCLUDES BY SAYING THAT "AT THE
VERY LEAST WE SHOULD TAKE A CRITICAL LOOK AT OUR PRESENT
CANADA-FIRST POLICY."

6. COMMENT: WHILE IT IS HARD TO EVALUATE INFLUENCE SUCH
ARTICLES MAY HAVE ON CANADIAN POLICY-MAKERS, THEIR APPEARANCE
IS TIMELY. STEVENS HAS SHOWN GREAT INTEREST IN
LOS MATTERS (HE VISITED CARACAS DURING SESSIONS THERE) AND
IT MUST BE ASSUMED HE WILL AT LEAST BE READ AND NOTED.
PORTER

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